DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 421 277 PS 026 785

TITLE	Early Childhood Education: SERVEing Young Children. Annual Report, 1998.
INSTITUTION	Southeastern Regional Vision for Education (SERVE), Tallahassee, FL.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	29p.; For 1997 Annual Report, see ED 413 069.
CONTRACT	RJ96006701
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Annual Reports; *Cooperative Programs; Coordination; *Early Childhood Education; Educational Quality; *Leadership Training; Partnerships in Education; Professional Development; Program Descriptions; Research and Development
IDENTIFIERS	Day Care Quality; *SouthEastern Regional Vision for Education

ABSTRACT

This annual report details the 1998 activities of the SouthEastern Regional Vision for Education (SERVE), the agency designated by the U.S. Department of Education as the regional educational laboratory responsible for the development of national leadership and expertise in early childhood education. Sections of the report describe: several SERVE training programs for caregivers and educators; research and development--or Partner--sites for the development, study, and/or evaluation of effective programs and practices; incidences of collaboration between SERVE and conferences and programs around the country; and areas of technical assistance provided by SERVE. SERVE's presentations, publication, and products are also described. The report concludes with articles from SERVE staff describing development of a reading program and future plans for SERVE initiatives. The report's appendix lists Regional Educational Laboratory/Early Childhood contacts, and upcoming conferences. (HTH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 421 277

the 1998

Early Childhood Education

PS 026785

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

SERVEing Young Children

Annual Report

SERVE

SouthEastern Regional Vision for Education

the 1998

SERVEing Young Children Annual Report

Early Childhood Education

Contents

About the SERVE Organization 2

Acknowledgments 4

Overview 5

Training Programs 6

Special Projects 8

Collaboration 11

Technical Assistance 13

Presentations, Publications, Products 14

View from the Field 17

What's Ahead 19

Appendix 20

Regional Educational Laboratory/Early Childhood Contacts 20

Upcoming Conferences 21

SERVE Publications Ordering Information 23

About the SERVE Organization

The SouthEastern Regional Vision for Education (SERVE) is a consortium of educational organizations whose mission is to promote and support the continual improvement of educational opportunities for all learners in the Southeast. Formed by a coalition of business leaders, governors, policymakers, and educators seeking systemic, lasting improvement in education, the organization is governed and guided by a Board of Directors that includes the chief state school officers, governors, and legislative representatives from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Committed to creating a shared vision of the future of education in the Southeast, the consortium impacts educational change by addressing critical educational issues in the region, acting as a catalyst for positive change and serving as a resource to individuals and groups striving for comprehensive school improvement.

SERVE's core component is a regional educational laboratory funded since 1990 by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), U.S. Department of Education. Building from this core, SERVE has developed a system of programs and initiatives that provides a spectrum of resources, services, and products for responding effectively to national, regional, state, and local needs. SERVE is a dynamic force, transforming national education reform strategies into progressive policies and viable initiatives at all levels. SERVE Laboratory programs and key activities are centered around

- Applying research and development related to improving teaching, learning, and organizational management
- Serving the educational needs of young children and their families more effectively
- Providing field and information services to promote and assist local implementation of research-based practices and programs
- Offering policy services, information, and assistance to decision makers concerned with developing progressive educational policy
- Connecting educators to a regional computerized communication system, so that they may search for and share information and network
- Developing and disseminating publications and products designed to give educators practical information and the latest research on common issues and problems

The Eisenhower Consortium for Mathematics and Science Education at SERVE is part of the national infrastructure for the improvement of mathematics and science education sponsored by OERI. The consortium coordinates resources, disseminates exemplary instructional materials, and provides technical assistance for implementing teaching methods and assessment tools.

The SouthEast and Islands Regional Technology in Education Consortium (SEIR◆TEC) serves 14 states and territories. A seven-member partnership led by SERVE, the consortium offers a variety of services to foster the infusion of technology into K-12 classrooms. The Region IV Comprehensive Assistance Center provides a coordinated, comprehensive approach to technical assistance through its partnership with SERVE.

A set of special purpose institutes completes the system of SERVE resources. These institutes provide education stakeholders extended site-based access to high-quality professional development programs, evaluation and assessment services, training and policy development to improve school safety, and subject area or project-specific planning and implementation assistance to support clients' school improvement goals.

Following the distributive approach to responding and providing services to its customers, SERVE has ten offices in the region. The North Carolina office at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro is headquarters for the Laboratory's

executive services and operations. Policy offices are located in the departments of education in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

SERVE–Alabama

Policy
Office forthcoming—please call any SERVE Policy office for assistance

SERVE–Florida

Database Information Services Center, Early Childhood, Field Services, Policy, Publications
1203 Governor's Square Blvd., Ste. 400
Tallahassee, FL 32301
(850) 671-6000
(800) 352-6001
Fax (850) 671-6020

Eisenhower Consortium for Mathematics and Science Education at SERVE
1203 Governor's Square Blvd., Ste. 400
Tallahassee, FL 32301
(850) 671-6033
(800) 854-0476
Fax (850) 671-6010

Florida Commissioner of Education's Office
The Capitol, LL 24
Tallahassee, FL 32399
(850) 488-9513
Fax (850) 488-1492

SERVE–Georgia

Teacher Leadership, Technology, Urban Education
41 Marietta Street, NW, Ste. 1000
Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 893-0100
(800) 659-3204
Fax (404) 577-7812

Policy
Georgia Dept. of Education
2054 Twin Towers East
Atlanta, GA 30334
(404) 657-0148
Fax (404) 651-5231

SERVE–Mississippi

Delta Project
Delta State University
P.O. Box 3183
Cleveland, MS 38733
(601) 846-4384
(800) 326-4548
Fax (601) 846-4402

Policy
Mississippi Dept. of Education
P.O. Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205
(601) 359-3501
Fax (601) 359-3667

SERVE–North Carolina

Evaluation, Executive Services, Operations, R&D
P.O. Box 5367
Greensboro, NC 27435
(336) 334-3211
(800) 755-3277
Fax (336) 334-3268

Policy
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
Education Building
301 North Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC 27601-2825
(919) 715-1245
Fax (919) 715-1278

SERVE–South Carolina

Policy
South Carolina Department of Education
1429 Senate Street
1005 Rutledge Building
Columbia, SC 29201
(803) 734-8496
Fax (803) 734-3389

SERVE, Inc.–North Carolina

Business Office
P.O. Box 5406
Greensboro, NC 27435
(336) 334-4669, (336) 334-4670
(800) 545-7075
Fax (336) 334-4671

SouthEast and Islands Regional Technology in Education Consortium (SEIR•TEC)
41 Marietta Street, NW, Ste. 1000
Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 893-0100
(800) 659-3204
Fax (404) 577-7812

Region IV Comprehensive Center
P.O. Box 5406
Greensboro, NC 27435
(336) 334-4667
(800) 545-7075
Fax (336) 334-4671

Evaluation and Assessment Services
P.O. Box 5367
Greensboro, NC 27435
(336) 334-3211
(800) 755-3277
Fax (336) 334-3268

Professional Development Institute (PDI)
P.O. Box 5406
Greensboro, NC 27435
(336) 334-4667
(800) 545-7075
Fax (336) 334-4671

Southeastern Regional Safe Schools Institute
P.O. Box 5406
Greensboro, NC 27435
(336) 334-4664, (336) 334-4665
(800) 545-7075
Fax (336) 334-4671

Anchor School Project
P.O. Box 5406
Greensboro, NC 27435
(336) 334-4667
(800) 545-7075
Fax (336) 334-4671

Charter Schools: SERVE Leaders Institute
P.O. Box 5406
Greensboro, NC 27435
(336) 334-4667
(800) 545-7075
Fax (336) 334-4671

SERVE
SouthEastern Regional Vision for Education

Acknowledgments. . .

Contributors, Reviewers, and Consultants

The SERVEing Young Children staff would like to extend a special thanks to Sandy Bostelman from Ben Hill County Schools in Georgia for her contribution to this publication.

The Editorial Consultant for this publication was Jim Bleyer.

SERVE Staff who contributed and assisted with production were:
Charles Ahearn, Senior Editor/Publications Manager
Glyn Brown, Program Specialist, SERVEing Young Children
Stephen Chapman, Editor/Program Specialist
Nancy Livesay, Program Director, SERVEing Young Children
Donna Nalley, Editor/Senior Program Specialist

Graphic Design by Stephen Chapman

The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

This document was produced with funding from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, under contract no. RJ96006701.

Overview

With the responsibility of developing national leadership and expertise in early childhood education into the next millenium, the SERVEing Young Children program launched several initiatives in 1997 to improve services and systems for children and families.

The program, a component of the SouthEastern Regional Vision for Education (SERVE), completed the second year of a five-year plan and has five major goals:

- To establish demonstration sites that apply products, processes, or knowledge of critical importance in the area of early childhood education and distribute this information nationwide
- To provide national leadership in the area of early childhood education through the establishment of a nationwide resource and referral system and by providing up-to-date research to professionals in early childhood education
- To share successes through case studies, mentoring programs, regional and national symposia, and products and publications
- To collaborate with other entities funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) in order to advance efforts to translate research into practice in the area of early childhood education
- To address critical issues of national importance in order to make an impact on outcomes for young children and their families

In order to achieve these goals, SERVEing Young Children was active on several fronts, inaugurating special projects, forming coalitions, sharing resources, publishing reports, providing technical assistance, conducting training, and facilitating meetings.

The work program is guided by a nationwide needs assessment which pinpointed four areas of critical concern: quality early care and education; education/training for caregivers and educators; linking services and improving delivery systems; and equitable access to quality care. Children age 8 and under and their families comprise the target population.

This annual report reviews program accomplishments, underscores the value of collaboration and partnerships, details newly-developed resources, and forecasts what's on the horizon in the early childhood field. Also included is a report from the field on the impact of early childhood program services and how they benefit the ultimate clients: young children and their families.

Training Programs

A nationwide needs assessment identified education and training for caregivers and educators as one of four areas of critical concern in the foreseeable future for early childhood education. Accordingly, SERVEing Young Children actively engages schools, districts, and families within the region in preparation for producing positive early childhood education outcomes.

Several programs are in place to achieve that goal.

Planning for School Improvement

In 1994, a South Georgia district, Brooks County, asked assistance from SERVEing Young Children in developing a schoolwide Title I plan. In response, SERVE developed a planning process for the district's use in formulating an action plan ready for implementation. This success resulted in requests from 16 other districts for SERVE's help in developing school improvement plans.

Of the 17 total districts, two were selected by SERVE for follow-up evaluation. One of the districts, Seminole County, is in the first year of implementing its plan; the second is Brooks, the original district, which is in the third year of a five-year plan.

In 1998, SERVEing Young Children staff will track the implementation of both plans and study the degree of success in improving student outcomes.

Preschool-to-School Transitions

This one-day training program—designed for care/education administrators and staff, Head Start-public school partnerships, child-care providers, school staff Pre-K-Grade 3, inclusion programs, parent liaisons, and families of young children—provides participants with an awareness and understanding of transitions.

Participants work together to define transitions, discuss the importance of facilitating both vertical and horizontal transitions, study transitions in special situations, and plan for effective transitions. The important roles of leadership and staff development are stressed. Additionally, the program provides tips for supporting children and families and suggests ways to monitor and evaluate transition efforts.

The SERVE publication *Terrific Transitions* was produced by SERVE in 1997 and is the text for this training.

Continuity in Early Childhood: A Framework for Home, School, and Community Linkages

This one-day training program assists home, school, and community partners to focus on policies and practices that support continuity of services. Basis for the training is the SERVE document, *Continuity in Early Childhood: A Framework for Home, School, and Community Linkages.* The publication, co-developed with the Early Childhood Education Laboratory Network Program, is intended for use by individuals, agencies, or groups who jointly plan, build partnerships, or conduct self-assessment in order to improve services to young children and their families.

A training manual, now under production by the Early Childhood Education Laboratory Network Program, will be available in the fall of 1998 to assist with staff training.

Maximizing the Nation's Brain Power

This program involves up to one day of training on early cognitive development and brain research for policymakers, community action groups, practitioners working with young children, public school personnel, and families.

Using information and training materials developed and disseminated by the Florida Starting Points Project, SERVEing Young Children conducts workshops on the latest findings about brain development and early learning, and the importance of early stimulation. The report called for action in four areas: promoting responsible parenthood, guaranteeing quality child-care choices, ensuring good health and protection, and mobilizing community support for young children and families.

The training is in response to the 1994 Report of the Carnegie Task Force on Meeting the Needs of Young Children.

In 1997, SERVEing Young Children staff attended a training of trainers on brain research that was funded by a Carnegie Foundation grant. Throughout the year, follow-up training was delivered to educators and child-care providers in the region upon request.

Infant and Toddler Training

This is a comprehensive, multimedia training system offered in four modules over an extended period for those working with the age 0-3 population. Included are a series of videos in three languages, written materials, and guides on infant and toddler caregiving.

The training system, which covers early development and caregiving practices, recommends program management strategies and policies and enables optimal group care.

Developed by the California Department of Education and WestEd, the regional education laboratory serving the western states, the program for infant and toddler caregivers offers training in these topics: Social Emotional Growth and Socialization; Group Care; Learning and Development; and Culture, Family, and Providers.

In 1997, a SERVEing Young Children staff member attended a training for trainers on infant and toddler development and became certified by WestEd to deliver this program.

Preparing for National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation

Geared to assist child-care centers and public schools in obtaining certification or accreditation, the training is provided on an as-needed basis and tailored to the specific needs of participants.

Staff members of SERVEing Young Children are trained as validators for NAEYC and are assigned by NAEYC to sites for collection of information in preparation for validation. In addition, SERVEing Young Children can work with sites other than those it visits for NAEYC.

Sites that are engaged in a self-study in preparation for accreditation can contact SERVE for ongoing technical support and training in the areas of: Staff/Child Interaction; Curriculum; Physical Environment; Health and Safety; Nutrition and Food Services; and Program Evaluation.

Improving Family Participation in Schools

This program can be a quick overview, one-hour, or a half-day workshop for school or district staff.

Using material from the publication, *Families and Schools: An Essential Partnership*, SERVEing Young Children staff can provide training for schools on ways to improve their relationships with the families they serve. This training helps school personnel analyze research about dealing with today's families. Participants are presented with a model that helps create a "new vision" for family participation.

The training is also appropriate for parent liaisons and can be adapted for them to use in a parent education workshop.

Special Projects

Research and Development Sites

One of the key goals of SERVEing Young Children is to identify sites for the development, study, and/or evaluation of effective and innovative programs and practices. These are research and development (R&D) sites, also known as Partner Sites.

A Partner Site is defined as a school, community, district, or state program that is involved in improving services to young children and their families. Sites agree to work with SERVEing Young Children to further develop and study the effectiveness of their work. During 1997, six R&D sites were identified within the region where interventions and activities were designed and an evaluation plan was completed. They include three Family Resource Centers, two School Improvement Projects, and one Parents As Teachers program.

General procedures are followed when a site joins the program. Initially, a Partner Site signs a formal agreement to work with SERVE in the conducting of development and evaluation activities. Information about the site's program and practice are shared; roles and responsibilities are negotiated to mutually benefit both partners. Some of these roles and responsibilities include

- Collecting and sharing information, data, and materials
- Discussing, designing, developing, and implementing plans
- Maintaining logs and records
- Conducting, monitoring, and reporting on activities
- Arranging and hosting visitations
- Conducting presentations
- Writing for publications

Partner sites are located in Brooks County, GA, and Seminole County, GA, (School Improvement Projects); Burke County, NC, (Parents As Teachers); and Orange County, FL; Dothan, AL; and Tupelo, MS (Family Resource Centers).

Obtaining the Partner Site designation has several benefits. Participants can receive local, state, and national recognition; on-site technical assistance; resources in the form of services or materials; opportunities to attend and conduct presentations at SERVE conferences and events; and access to information and consulting services. The site also has the opportunity to contribute to the knowledge base in early childhood education.

Upon request, SERVEing Young Children provides stipends, on-site assistance, and consultation. SERVE staff also conducts or facilitates the development, data collection, information gathering, and reporting of the work of the Partner Site to regional and national education entities.

Head, Heart, and Hands for Our Youngest Children Literacy Project

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley has declared as a national goal to have all children reading by grade 3/age 8. In line with the objective, SERVEing Young Children has developed a packet for establishing a community

action campaign for literacy known as *Head, Heart, and Hands for Our Youngest Children.*

The program is an effort to bring state and community leaders together to identify needs, establish priorities, and initiate steps, either system-wide or community-wide, to support literacy for young children and their families.

The packet contains four components: an invitation to join, a position paper, a sample policy statement, and a sample brochure. The materials are designed to inspire action and build a grassroots movement to fight illiteracy. Part of that movement is the development of a Community Literacy Resource Kit.

Two states in the southeastern region, South Carolina and Mississippi, have offered to test the materials in selected communities. The first community to launch an early literacy effort will be Greenville, SC, which is scheduled to form a community task force in early 1998. In support of the effort, SERVEing Young Children will provide on-site assistance, guide the development and revision of resource materials, and document activities.

The pilot communities are expected to assess their infrastructure for supporting literacy and draw upon the appropriate resources available. The communities will need to determine such issues as whether or not they possess an effective system for getting educational information to families of newborns and if families are aware of available services that support their child's early development and learning.

SERVEing Young Children will assess and evaluate the effectiveness of *Head, Heart, and Hands* materials for facilitating community action and supporting local needs. Strategies include conducting focus groups, interviewing community leaders and parents, and maintaining anecdotal records. Participants will be asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the packet in inspiring a grassroots literacy campaign and whether materials are adequate in promoting specific action.

Following the completion of the first pilot in South Carolina, the materials will be adapted or revised for use by a second site in Mississippi. The same evaluation design will be implemented. SERVEing Young Children will use a case study to reflect the results of the pilot projects.

The ultimate goal of the program is to fine-tune the resource materials and have them available for mass distribution throughout the region.

Choctaw Project

With approximately $25,000 in funding specifically earmarked, SERVEing Young Children has been assisting the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians with the integration of educational technology into early childhood programs. These include Head Start, day-care programs, and K-2 classrooms in six tribal schools on the reservation.

The ultimate goal of the project is to expand the use of technology for educating young children to age eight and link this with an overall K-12 technology plan. In order to achieve this, SERVEing Young Children will

- Develop and offer several awareness activities to create a better understanding of the appropriate technologies available for early childhood education
- Determine what further course of action to take based on the needs and expectations of parents and school staff

In 1997, SERVEing Young Children conducted a needs assessment to obtain baseline information on parent and employee understanding of the

types of technology available for the classroom and its potential uses in the education of young children. Focus group protocols and surveys were developed; the needs assessment was conducted by staff members from both SERVEing Young Children and the Choctaw Tribal Schools.

Educators, parents, students, and tribal leaders also participated in a SERVE-sponsored technology fair as an awareness activity. The fair was followed by focus groups and surveys to assess the effectiveness of the activity. The information was shared with participants from each of the six school sites as well as the community at large. SERVEing Young Children also facilitated a two-day Provider's Conference which resulted in formulating action plans for the Tribal Department.

Continuation of the project in 1998, contingent on national funding, will involve the development of a comprehensive plan for the procurement and integration of educational technology for young children.

Work with the Choctaw Tribal System is being coordinated with the Regional Technology Educational Consortium (RTEC) and the National Center for Adult Literacy.

Collaboration

First Annual Early Childhood Policy Conference

SERVEing Young Children, in association with the National Center for Early Development & Learning (NCEDL), convened a working conference for policy representatives from the southeastern region in Ft. Mill, SC.

As a prelude to the conference, SERVE gathered information from each of the six states within the region. Approximately six-to-seven representatives from each state helped formulate the conference plan by airing their views in regard to format, potential topics and speakers, and invitees. Participants represented agency heads, governor's offices, advocacy groups, and child-care organizations.

The input gleaned from the focus groups and survey guided the planning of the First Annual Early Childhood Policy Conference. Sixty-eight policymakers, state and district decision makers, and agency heads attended the two-day meeting where they received the latest early childhood research and worked together in state teams on current policy issues. One of the conference goals was to determine the degree to which this process might be replicated in other states. It is hoped that this will occur during the five-year contract period.

Florida's Children's Summit—February 1997

SERVEing Young Children was invited to serve as a co-sponsor for the First Annual Children's Summit sponsored by the Governor's Office, Office of External Affairs. Staff set up a display and exhibited SERVE resources and materials, and sponsored the cost for one of the concurrent sessions. The primary focus of the summit was on the latest findings related to brain research and the importance of stimulating cognitive development, particularly in the area of language, within the first years of a young child's life.

Early Childhood Education Laboratory Network Program

In collaboration with other laboratory and center partners, SERVE worked on developing tools for early childhood educators and caregivers. An online resource was compiled citing quality instruments. This "quality in child care" resource

underwent a first draft in 1997 and will be available in 1998 on the SERVEing Young Children Web site. The partners are also working on compiling a list of lab and center training materials for the Web site.

Stand for Children

In conjunction with the launching of the national Stand for Children initiative headed up by the Children's Defense Fund, SERVEing Young Children joined with a local initiative sponsored by the Public Agenda and the City of Tallahassee (FL). Working with other agencies and business representatives in Tallahassee, staff attended several meetings, shared resources and expertise, and supported efforts of local schools in planning a Southside Showcase. The purpose of this effort was to highlight some of the excellent work being done by children and young adults and to show that the community in Florida's state capitol stands behind its children during the Stand for Children campaign.

Integrated Services Pilot Project

SERVEing Young Children staff members, at the invitation of the University of North Florida (UNF) and the Florida Department of Education, assisted with an Integrated Services Pilot Project. SERVE's role was that of Adjunct Professor for a distance learning class at ten pilot sites across the state.

The class served as partial fulfillment for a UNF Special Projects class. Pilot site teams were required to develop an implementation plan for integrating support services at their school sites during the 1997-98 school year.

Barnett Bank's Award Program

Last year, a SERVEing Young Children staff member served on the award committee for the Barnett Bank Family Involvement Award. Co-sponsored by the Florida Department of Education and the Florida PTA, the award is given to the best parent involvement plans. Submissions are judged on five factors:

- Impact on families
- Level of involvement
- Ease of replication/cost/time
- Innovation
- Relationship to school goals

Technical Assistance

Florida Collaboration Grant Program

Staff provided assistance to communities in Florida that received grants from the state to improve collaborative activities in order to improve services to young children and their families. Grantees in Lake Co., Okaloosa-Walton Co., and Indian River/Okeechobee/Martin called on SERVEing Young Children for assistance and support. At the state level, SERVE assisted the Florida Department of Education in hosting meetings for these grantees.

Alabama Department of Education

The SERVEing Young Children program, in collaboration with the Field Services Unit of SERVE, worked with the state of Alabama to assist with planning for statewide school improvement efforts. SERVEing Young Children also facilitated a meeting of the leadership committee that worked to implement the newly funded Head Start Collaboration grant.

Client Information Packets

SERVEing Young Children prepares information packets on specific topics upon request from clients in the region or across the nation. During 1997, SERVEing Young Children staff assisted teachers, principals, association members, state officials, and business people with information on topics including early childhood curriculum, instruction, and assessment; parent involvement; starting up a child care program; multi-age grouping; block scheduling; teacher preparation and credentialing; class size; teacher leadership; pre-k programming; implementing all day kindergarten; effective schools information; reading; instructional technology for young children; interagency collaboration; inclusion; and policy issues.

Presentations, Publications, Products

A major goal in SERVEing Young Children's five-year plan is "to share successes through case studies, mentoring programs, regional and national symposia, and products and publications." The dissemination of research and resource information is critical to the laboratory fulfilling its role as the nation's flagship early childhood education program.

Several important presentations, publications, and products completed in 1997 brought focus to early childhood education issues regionally and nationally.

The SERVE Regional Forum on School Improvement

SERVEing Young Children designed and developed the Early Childhood and Family Involvement strand at the 1997 SERVE Regional Forum on School Improvement which carried the theme "Classrooms at the Crossroads." Held in Atlanta in October, the Forum was attended by approximately 400 educators from throughout the Southeast.

The five early childhood topics included

- *Early Childhood Policy Development.* Participants learned about the latest quality early care and education research and how it supports the need for policy development, especially in the area of funding. Newly developed "resource maps" illustrating the flow of federal and state funds helped pinpoint areas of possible collaboration among service providers, educators, families, and child-care agencies.

- *Preparing Educators in Early Childhood Education.* Two university programs reported on the needs in preparing principals and teachers in dealing with demands of families and communities in the field of early childhood education. Blended programs, best practices, and innovative course content highlighted the universities' "call to action."

- *Family Literacy.* The national focus on literacy and reading by age 8/grade 3 has inspired local and state leaders to address this issue. Presenters described initiatives that offer community support systems to families of young children.

These systems promote literacy and school readiness beginning at birth.

- *Risk and Resiliency in Young Children.* Identification of risk factors in young children can help build resiliency in them through integrated services teams and ensure the needs of all children are met. These risk factors can occur in the home, school, and community. Participants learned how to use data sources, design programs, and implement a collaborative problem-solving model.

- *Brain Development in Young Children: How to Facilitate Early Learning.* Research shows that during the first three years of life, the foundation is established for thinking, learning, attitudes, and aptitudes. Participants learned how the brain develops and the most recent findings about brain development in infants and toddlers. Strategies were outlined for stimulating young children in order to enhance language and cognitive functioning.

A Call to Action: Family Involvement as a Critical Component of Teacher Education Programs

Although greater family participation in early childhood programs is a widely-held goal, its implementation in actual practice is weak. Despite federal mandates for greater participation in the education and care of young children, professional development in family involvement has lagged behind demand.

This publication addresses the fundamental skills that early childhood teachers and caregivers need to fully involve families in their young children's lives at school and the child-care center. The "call to action" also recommends actions for preservice and inservice professional development programs to build those skills.

Beginning with a summary of the historic role of parents in early childhood education and public policy concerning parent participation, the report includes a review of family systems theory, a summary of what practitioners need to know to promote meaningful participation, and strategies for including family involvement in professional development.

Welfare to Work: Early Childhood Care and Education

By the repeal of a long-standing social contract, The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act has ended the federal government's guarantee of financial assistance to the needy. The goal of the law is to move families off welfare and into jobs thereby ending decades of guaranteed cash to anyone who is eligible for financial support.

This SERVE policy brief highlights the background on government assistance, an analysis of the new law, the role of children in the welfare-to-work equation, the effects of the reform on them, examples of some state reforms, and suggestions for policymakers, states, and local communities.

A chart delineates the differences in welfare reform among the six states in the SERVE region, and state contacts for administration of welfare reform legislation are listed.

Terrific Transitions

In the field of early childhood care and education, "transitions" refers to differences in services among agencies, environments, and institutions. For children, significant transitions occur as they move from home to preschool, preschool to early elementary school, and school to after-school activities.

This publication focuses on the importance of providing continuity to help smooth transitions for children. Special needs are described, the effect of federal laws discussed, and steps in transition planning outlined. Examples of exemplary programs are given as well as preparation of children and families in the transition process.

The appendix contains several transition tools: a timeline, family strategies for coping with transition, a sample letter to families, a family transition questionnaire, and a child information form.

Worksite Parenting Handbook

Working with the North Carolina Business Committee for Education, Office of the Governor, SERVEing Young Children began production of a Worksite Parenting Handbook in 1997 with completion and dissemination to businesses in the Southeast scheduled during the first half of 1998. The handbook will describe successful programs that balance work and family life, outline the benefits to business from having these programs, and explain how companies can initiate these programs using a step-by-step guide.

The SERVEing Young Children Program revised an existing handbook produced by the North Carolina Business Committee for Education and Nortel Corporation in the Research Triangle area of North Carolina. The success and acceptance of this handbook prompted the business committee to have a revised and updated version produced, one that would serve a broader audience.

The publication, targeted primarily to small- and medium-sized businesses, will also serve as an update of SERVE's previously produced *Family Involvement in Early Childhood Education: A Guide for Business.*

Effective Child-Care Videotape

During the last quarter of 1997, SERVEing Young Children completed videotaping for a training tape of exemplary child-care programs. The videotape, upon completion in 1998, will be used primarily to train child care providers on appropriate and effective practices and procedures, as well as assist them in conducting a self-study of their center.

Three diverse child care facilities in the Southeast were identified for participation in the development of the video. In 1997, these centers were visited and videotape footage documented the good work being done there. The Birmingham Early Learning Center, a child care center sponsored by local businesses in Birmingham, AL, will be featured along with two sites in Florida. One of these sites is the Child Development Center on the campus of Florida State University that serves the University population and is also a training facility for interns; the second is the Temple Beth Shalom School, a private center operating in Sarasota, FL. All three centers exemplify the accreditation standards outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

View from the Field

by Sandy Bostelman,
Director of Curriculum
Ben Hill County Schools
Fitzgerald, Georgia

With test scores below state and national averages reflecting reading weakness, the Ben Hill County School System saw the need for improved literacy instruction. Working with the 10 systems in our Regional Education Service Agency and SERVE's SERVEing Young Children and Field Services staff last year, we developed and implemented a balanced reading program.

The improvement process was multi-faceted with the participation of every teacher and administrator in grades 1-5. Two factors helped us meet the challenge: our unwavering commitment to reading improvement and SERVE's extensive leadership.

Located in a rural area of South Georgia, our school system serves 3,700 students with a large minority population. The community boasts a low unemployment rate, but the high-school dropout rate is 29 percent. A strong business/community partnership and the system's designation as a Communities in Schools site are efforts to increase graduation rates.

Five components comprise the design for reading instruction:

- A team worked during the summer of 1997 to develop K-8 language arts objectives which were aligned with Georgia's Quality Core Curriculum, the Georgia Writing Assessment, and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. These are being piloted in the system. High school objectives were aligned to the Quality Core Curriculum and the Georgia High School Graduation Test.
- Benchmarks were developed for grades 2, 5, and 8.
- K-5 thematic units were revised to spiral content.
- Parallel block scheduling in grades 1-5 was implemented to allow more time for reading and reading instruction, smaller class size, and flexible grouping so that needs at various instructional levels could be met.
- Implementation of direct, systematic phonics was achieved through Patricia Cunningham's 4-Block Model. Every teacher was trained to use the four blocks as a way to implement our established nine components of balanced reading.

We strongly believed that to have systemic change, a coaching model should be put in place. Therefore, we trained a cadre of teachers to serve as grade-level coaches. This training was provided through a reassignment of a Valdosta State University reading professor. Principals and building instructional supervisors also participated in the training. These coaches provide a support system to other teachers.

In July, all central office and building administrators were trained on the components of the balanced reading program and the assessment of literacy instruction. We believe it is critical that administrators and teachers work together in the implementation of balanced reading so that teachers can obtain much-needed continuous assistance. The university professor meets with every teacher in grades 1-5 on a regular basis to monitor progress, answer questions, share new ideas, and address specific problems.

On the assessment front, all students in grades 1-2 took the Ekwall-Shanker this school year. In grades 3-5, The Academy of Reading Diagnostic Module was used. A post test will be administered at the end of the year to measure progress. Teachers use running records to continue the diagnostic process throughout the school year. Norm-referenced tests given are the Gates MacGintie in grades 1-2 and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills in grades 3-5.

Resources developed during the reading program's implementation were leveled books for every classroom. This ensures that every child reads every day on his or her instructional level.

Software provided by the Academy of Reading assists in this effort. Other resources include

- The Academy of Reading, a networked program for grades 3-5 available in the classrooms and two labs were scheduled each week for all students; two after-school classes were initiated to serve 30 of the lowest-functioning students and two more will be added.
- A Literacy Handbook is being developed that will be a major resource for every teacher; the book, which will be updated on an ongoing basis, will be a compilation of expectations for students and teachers, instructional strategies, and research.
- An Accelerated Reader Program for K-5 was initiated to support the component of self-selected reading and develop comprehension and fluency.

Throughout the intensive process of developing and implementing the balanced reading program, SERVE provided research, technical assistance, and support to the Curriculum Consortium that developed the program components and staff development model. SERVE also assisted with our county technology and Schoolwide Title I plans. This partnership was invaluable.

What's Ahead

The coming year will see the continuation of several current initiatives and the establishment of others.

Teacher preparation occupies a high priority for SERVEing Young Children. A process to identify universities for implementation of innovative teacher preparation programs will be introduced. The teacher preparation document that was developed in 1997 will be disseminated to selected early childhood departments in colleges and universities throughout the country.

In the important area of resource development, the program will begin to develop, establish, and maintain a comprehensive database which will serve as a national resource and referral system. SERVEing Young Children also anticipates beginning the compilation of quality checklists for families with children in child care to eventually be made available on the Internet. Other third-year initiatives include

- Amplifying a training tape to be used with child-care providers to promote quality care
- Collaborating with the North Carolina Business Committee for Education in the completion and dissemination of a handbook for worksite parenting programs
- Developing a research brief on pupil progression
- Providing technical assistance to early childhood migrant communities in collaboration with the regional Comprehensive Assistance Center
- Collaborating with other regional laboratories in addressing awareness of quality and policy issues and the development of a training manual
- Continuation of data collection work at the six partner R&D sites

The effectiveness of the three models for delivering integrated services through Family Resource Centers will be evaluated, comprehensive school improvement will be studied, and an annual report will be submitted reporting on those activities. In a follow-up to the family literacy project *Head, Heart, and Hands for Our Youngest Children*, test materials will be piloted. SERVEing Young Children will again assist with the next SERVE Forum. Collaboration will continue with SEIR◆TEC in the development and monitoring of a plan to integrate technology into Choctaw Tribal Schools early childhood programs. Evaluation of the Parents As Teachers program in Burke County, NC, will be conducted.

In all, another exciting and productive year lies ahead.

Appendix

Regional Educational Laboratory/ Early Childhood Contacts

Appalachia Educational Laboratory (AEL)
Carol Perroncel
1031 Quarrier St., 2nd Floor
Charleston, WV 25301
304-347-0473
304-347-0487 FAX
perroncc@ael.org

Laboratory for Students Success at Temple University (LSS)
Margaret Wang
Evelyn Kline
933 Ritter Annex
13th Street and Cecil B. Moore Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19122
215-204-3030
215-204-5130 FAX
mcw@vm.temple.edu

Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL)
Judy Northup
Dan Jesse
2550 South Parker Rd., Suite 500
Aurora, CO 80014
303-743-5541
303-337-3005 FAX
jnorthup@mcrel.org
djesse@mcrel.org

National Center for Early Development & Learning (NCEDL)
Pam Winton
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center
Sheryl-Mar Suite 100 CB #8185
Chapel Hill, NC 27599
919-966-7180
919-966-0862 FAX
pam_winton@unc.edu

North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL)
Judy Caplan
1900 Spring Rd., Suite 300
Oak Brook, IL 60521
800-356-2735
708-218-4991
708-571-4716 FAX
jcaplan@ncrel.org

Northeast & Islands Laboratory at Brown (LAB)
Charlene Heintz
144 Wayland Ave.
Providence, RI 02906
401-274-9548
401-421-7650 FAX
charlene_heintz@brown.edu

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL)
Terry Elofson
Tim Speth
101 S.W. Main St., Suite 500
Portland, OR 97204
503-275-9500
503-275-9625 FAX
elofson@nwrel.org
speth@nwrel.org

Pacific Regional Educational Laboratory (PREL)
Juvenna (Jeve) Chang
828 Fort Street Mall, Suite 500
Honolulu, HI 96813
808-533-6000
808-533-7599 FAX
changj@prel.hawaii.edu

SouthEastern Regional Vision for Education (SERVE)
Nancy Livesay
Glyn Brown
1203 Governor Square Blvd., Suite 400
Tallahassee, FL 32301
800-352-6001
850-671-6076
850-671-6020 FAX
nlivesay@serve.org
gbrown@serve.org

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL)
211 East Seventh St.
Austin, TX 78701-3281
512-476-6861, ext. 210
512-476-2286 FAX

WestEd
Peter Mangione
180 Harbor Dr., Suite 112
Sausalito, CA 94965
415-331-5277
415-331-0301 FAX
pmangio@wested.org

Upcoming Conferences

Children's Defense Fund
March 25-28, 1998
Los Angeles, CA
Contact: Ms. Warrick (202) 662-3593

Southern Early Childhood Association
March 26-28,1998
Louisville, KY

National Association of Elementary School Principals
April 4-7, 1998
Orlando Florida
(800) 38-NAESP

American Educational Research Association
April 13-17, 1998
San Diego, CA
(202) 223-9485

Council for Exceptional Children
April 14-18, 1998
Minneapolis, MN
(888) CEC-SPED

Association for Childhood Education International
April 15-18, 1998
Hyatt Regency Westshore
Tampa, FL
(301) 570-2111 or (800) 423-3563

Save the Children
April 16-19, 1998
Atlanta, GA
(404) 479-4225

National Center for Family Literacy
April 19-21, 1998
Louisville, KY
Contact: Carmel Mackin (502) 584-1133

National Head Start Association
April 20-25, 1998
Seattle, WA
(703) 739-0875

National School-Age Care Alliance
April 30-May 2, 1998
Seattle, WA
(206) 461-3602

National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies
May 17-19, 1998
Savannah, GA

National Association of Child Care Professionals
May 20-23, 1998
New Orleans, LA
(800) 537-1118

Stand for Children Day 1998
June 1, 1998
In Your Hometown
(800) 666-4032 (Call for a free kit)

National Association for the Education of Young Children National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development
June 17-20, 1998
Miami, FL
(800) 424-2460 or
(202) 232-8777

National Parent Teacher Association
June 27-30, 1998
Nashville, TN
(800) 307-4PTA

Parents As Teachers
June 27-30, 1998
St. Louis, MO

National Association for Family Child Care
July 30 - August 2, 1998
Orlando, FL
(515) 282-8192

National Association for Partners in Education
October 10-19, 1998
Los Angeles, CA
(703) 836-4880

National Black Child Development Institute
October 10-13, 1998
Chicago, IL
(202) 234-1738

National Indian Education Association
October 11-14, 1998
Nashville, TN
Contact: Lorraine Edmo, (703) 838-2870

National Association for the Education of Young Children
November 18-21, 1998
Toronto, Ontario CANADA
(800) 424-2460

SERVE Publications Ordering Information

1. Please complete the order form at the end of the publications/products listing and mail with check or purchase order to SERVE, 1203 Governor's Square Boulevard, Suite 400, Tallahassee, Florida 32301. Make check or purchase order out to SERVE, a federally funded contract administered by the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (Federal ID EIN#56-6001-468).

2. Discounts are available for most SERVE products when you purchase units of fifty or more. Please contact 800-352-6001 for discount information.

3. If you are requesting an invoice, your order must include a purchase order number.

4. We ship by U.S. Mail and United Parcel Service. Please calculate your shipping charges from the table below. Shipping charges will be higher for special orders and shipping outside the continental U.S. Please allow two weeks for delivery from the time we receive the order in our office. If you require special shipping arrangements, let us know. In most cases, we can accommodate your needs. Publication prices are subject to change.

5. For more information regarding SERVE's products and ordering procedures, please call 800-352-6001.

Shipping and Handling Charges

Up	to	$30.00	$2.50
$30.01	to	$60.00	$5.00
$60.01	to	$100.00	$7.50
$100.01	to	$150.00	$10.00
$150.01	to	$200.00	$12.50
$200.01	and	above	call for price

Publications

DESCRIPTION	ITEM#	PRICE
1996 SERVE Regional Forum on School Improvement Proceedings	SIPROC	$8.00
1997 SERVE Regional Forum on School Improvement Proceedings	SIPRO2	$8.00
Achieving Your Vision of Professional Development	HTEPD	$10.00
Action Research: Perspectives from Teachers' Classrooms	MSARP	$12.00
Appreciating Differences: Teaching and Learning in a Culturally Diverse Classroom	HTADI	$10.00
Assessment in Early Childhood Education: Status of the Issue	ECESI	$1.00
A Call to Action: Family Involvement as a Critical Component of Teacher Education Programs	HTCTA	$6.00
Children Exposed to Drugs: Meeting Their Needs	HTSEC	$10.00
Children Exposed to Drugs: What Policymakers Can Do	PBCED	$1.00
Comprehensive School Improvement	HTCSI	$8.00
Continuity in Early Childhood Education: A Framework for Home, School, and Community Linkages	ECECE	$12.00

Designing Teacher Evaluation Systems that Support Professional Growth	RDTES	$8.00
Does Class Size Make a Difference?	RDCSD	$4.00
Ed Talk: What We Know About Mathematics Teaching and Learning	EDMAT	$7.00
Ed Talk: What We Know About Reading Teaching and Learning	EDRTL	$7.00
Ed Talk: What We Know About Science Teaching and Learning	EDSCI	$7.00
Evaluation of the Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing Program	RDADE	$4.00
Families and Schools: An Essential Partnership	SSFSP	$6.00
Future Plans Planning Guide	FPPLG	$8.00
Going to Scale with TQM: The Pinellas County Schools' Journey Toward Quality	SSPCS	$12.00
How to Assess Student Performance in Science: Going Beyond Multiple-Choice Tests	RDSPS	$10.00
Improving Schools Now: Accessing SERVE's Programs, Products, and Publications	PRHIS	FREE
Improving Student Motivation: A Guide for Teachers and School Improvement Leaders	RDISM	$12.00
Interagency Collaboration: Improving the Delivery of Services to Children and Families	HTICO	$12.00
Issues to Consider in Moving Beyond a Minimal Competency High School Graduation Test	RDMCT	$4.00
Learning By Serving: 2,000 Ideas for Service Learning Programs	HTLBS	$8.00
A New Framework for School Accountability Systems	RDFRA	$3.00
Overcoming Barriers to School Reform in the Southeast	RDBAR	$3.00
Planning for School Improvement: A Report on a Comprehensive Planning Process	SRPSI	$1.00
PROBE: Designing School Facilities for Learning	PRDSF	$10.00
Promising Service-Learning Programs	SSPSL	$1.00
Reducing School Violence: Building a Framework for School Safety	HTRSV	$8.00
Reengineering High Schools for Student Success	HTRHS	$8.00
Reflecting on Progress: Site-Based Management and School Improvement in North Carolina	RDROP	$4.00
Resources for School Improvement: How to Improve Schools Now	HTRSI	$10.00
Safe Schools: What the Southeast is Doing	PBSSC	$1.00
School Board Member Training in the Southeast	RDBMT	$4.00
Schools for the 21st Century: New Roles for Teachers and Principals	HTSTC	$8.00
Science in the Elementary Classroom: Portraits of Action Research	MSARE	$12.00
Selecting High-Quality Charter Schools: What Policymakers Can Do	PBSCS	$1.00
South Pointe Elementary School (Year 1): A Public-Private Partnership	RDSP1	$1.00
South Pointe Elementary School (Year 2): A Public-Private Partnership	RDSP2	$1.00
South Pointe Elementary School (Year 3): A Public-Private Partnership	RDSP3	$1.00
Southern Crossroads: A Demographic Look at the Southeast	SRSCR	$3.00
Supporting Family Involvement in Early Childhood Education: A Guide for Business	SRSFI	$5.00
Technology Infrastructure in Schools *and* Plugging In: Choosing and Using Educational Technology	PITI	$10.00
Terrific Transitions: Ensuring Continuity of Services for Children and Their Families	ECTTC	$5.00
Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services	SRTWC	$8.00

Total Quality Management: Passing Fad or "The Real Thing"? An Implementation Study	RDTQM	$5.00
Using Accountability as a Lever for Changing the Culture of Schools: Examining District Strategies	RDUAL	$8.00
Using Technology to Improve Teaching and Learning	HTTEC	$8.00
Welfare to Work: Early Childhood Care and Education	PBWTW	$1.00
Youth Apprenticeship: A School-to-Work Transition Program	HTYAP	$8.00

Videotapes

Drug-Free Schools: A Generation of Hope (Running time: 27:00)	VTDFS	$19.95
Future Plans Videotape: Making the Most of Technology in the Classroom (Running time: 27:10)	FPPAK	$19.95
Passages: Providing Continuity from Preschool to School (Running time: 32:25)	VTPST	$19.95
School Improvement: A Journey Toward Change (Running time: 23:00)	VTCSI	$19.95
Southern Crossroads: A Demographic Look at the Southeast (Running time: 22:00)	VTSCR	$19.95
Southern Solutions in Improving Mathematics and Science: General Audiences (Running time: 27:00)	VTMS3	$19.95
Southern Solutions in Improving Mathematics and Science: Policymakers (Running time: 60:00)	VTMS6	$19.95
Southern Solutions in Improving Mathematics and Science: Teachers/Practitioners (Running time: 1:24:00)	VTMS9	$19.95

Training and Seminars

For information on these training programs, please call 800-352-6001.		
Leadership for Collaboration: A Training Program	TRNLC	
Providing a Safe and Healthy School Community	TRNSH	
For information on these training programs, please call 800-545-7075.		
Legal Principles Related to School Violence, Safety, Security and Student Management Discipline	TRNLP	

CD-ROM

To order this item, please call 800-545-7075.		
M.U.D. Pie, 1997		$49.95

SERVE Publications Order Form

Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization or School: _____

Address: ❑ home ❑ work _____

_____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: ❑ home ❑ work ( ) _____

Fax: ❑ home ❑ work ( ) _____

PO# _____

Quantity	Description	Item No.	Unit Price	Total

Subtotal	
Non-exempt Florida residents add 7% sales tax:	
S & H*	
Total	

Mail to:
SERVE
Publications Department
1203 Governor's Square Blvd.
Suite 400
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Please photocopy this form for future orders.

Florida Tax Exemption #:

the

1998

SERVEing
Young
Children

Annual Report